



## **WHITESTOWN MUNICIPAL COMPLEX**

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### **WHITESTOWN GROWING WITH NEXT GENERATION IN MIND**

#### ***Planning Director Sees Youth as an Advantage in Molding Community's Future***

Whitestown, Ind. -- Lauren Bailey is young. In fact, at 24, she may be the youngest Director of Planning and Community Development of any municipality in the state. But the Ball State graduate – and her bosses – see that as an advantage in charting the future of the fastest growing community in Indiana.

“Being in such an active community, I’m learning more than many of my colleagues would at this point in their lives and I’m very appreciative of this opportunity.” said Bailey, whose office in the new Whitestown Municipal Complex is filled with maps and development plans that will help chart what the quickly-growing Boone County community will look like in five, 10, even 20 years.

That vision includes the type of urban development typically seen in much bigger cities, like Indianapolis. One plan will create five or six small ‘urban villages’ throughout Whitestown, with each boasting unique amenities specific to that area. “So we envision creating maybe an arts district, a business district and a technology district, for example. All would have retail, restaurants and entertainment within walking and biking distance to create small communities within the community.” said Bailey, who brings a unique mind-set to planning because of her youth.

The town’s new comprehensive plan also calls for more green space and walking and biking trails, like the Farm Heritage Trail currently under construction, which will eventually run from Lafayette to Zionsville and link into the popular Monon Trail.

Also in the works, a plan to add a 10-foot wide walking and biking path along each side of Main Street from the Legacy Core, the old downtown, to the thriving Anson area of Whitestown just off I-65.

“That will give residents of the Legacy Core and the neighborhoods along Main Street the opportunity to bike or walk to Meijer, stores and amenities,” she said, adding, “Greenspace is essential for a growing

town. You have to plan for those amenities that families want. You need to have a balance of retail and all of the different elements families want, not just industrial growth.”

Bailey personally prefers to walk, bike or roller blade instead of climbing behind the wheel. “I never drove in college and I think my generation prefers to park their cars and walk or bike if possible,” said Bailey, “I think my generation is going to be less dependent on vehicular traffic. We’re more about emerging ways to get to where you’re going, and it saves gas.”

There’s good reason to bring family-friendly amenities to Whitestown. More than a thousand families have flocked to the community over the past several years. In fact, Whitestown has seen a nearly 37-percent increase in residents over a three year period, well ahead of surrounding communities.

“Right now, total, we’ve got in 110 building permits in the first 4 months of this year. That’s a record for us,” said Bailey. 73 of those permits are for new residential construction, a number that far surpasses permit requests in surrounding communities like Zionsville and Lebanon.

“Lauren came to us straight from graduation from Ball State and we knew that she was going to make a name for herself very rapidly.” said Town Manager Dax Norton, “She is a very impressive young professional. We knew that we could place her in a leadership position right away, and now she is excelling as the Director of Planning for the fastest growing community in the state of Indiana.”

Bailey, who’s been on the job now for just over a year, says she has plenty of energy and passion to keep up with the booming growth rate Whitestown is currently experiencing in both residential and business sectors. She’s excited to see what Whitestown becomes. “Whitestown is an Urban Planner’s dream come true,” she said, “We’re focusing on progressive and innovative development, so planning will never get boring. The town is changing dramatically, and being a part of that is exciting!”

### **Notes about Lauren:**

- has a degree in Urban Planning & Development from Ball State University
- is a member of the American Planning Association
- previously assisted in Fortville’s Main Street Revitalization Plan, creating multi-modal transportation systems

### **Fast Facts:**

- Whitestown is the fastest growing community in Indiana
- A population of about 3,000 in 2010 has swelled to about 5,500 residents, with the projected population expected to be about 12,000 residents by the next census in 2020

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